

## BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

Read Matt 5:9 together Likely most well known and most oft quoted of the beatitudes. It expresses the deepest longing of most people's hearts for genuine and lasting peace. We live in world of troublemakers, covenant breakers, heart breakers, aggression, conflict, chaos, violence – long for peace in our hearts, homes, world

1935 Gen Macarthur said 'in last 3400 years there have been 268 years have been free of wars (1/13). Since 1945 our world has been without war for 26 days. (.1 of 1%) Peace is that glorious moment in history where everyone stops to reload.

Jesus says blessed are the peacemakers – wonder what kind of response Jesus got from his disciples and those around him when he spoke these words. Israel under boot of hated Romans – Simon was zealot (freedom fighter of day) who believed liberation and peace only come through war

Matthew tax collector – inwardly despised Romans had bought into thought 'can't beat them join them.' So he made his living at his own people's expense

James and John had wanted to call fire down on Samaritans for refusing to let Jesus and his disciples pass through their village – Sons of thunder – well known for temper

Peter carried sword under his coat and was quick to use it to cut off ear of high priests servant when Jesus was arrested in garden of Gethsemane

Ordinary people like you and me – doing battles with divisions, alienation, feuds, hostilities between nations and ethnic and language groups, social groups – into that Jesus says Matt 5:9

So how do we become blessed peacemakers when the battles rage all around us and we hardly feel or experience much peace inside.

Noted before that beatitudes build on each other – cannot pick and choose which we prefer

- a) Start acknowledge our own spiritual bankruptcy and dependence on God
- b) That acknowledgment leads us to mourn and repent of our sin
- c) So we willingly place our strength in meekness under his control
- d) Consequence of that is we start to see world from God's eyes and desire his passions to be our own – hunger and thirst for his righteousness
- e) In light of that God showers his mercy on us so we in turn choose to respond to others in same way
- f) As we continue to receive his mercy our hearts are refined and purified and seeing God's face becomes our chief desire

That brings us to 5:9 – share principles that can be applied in families, friends, church, community

## Peacemaker

- a) Not peace lover and peace keeper and peace eulogizer
- b) Wyatt Earp called his colt 45 'peacemaker' – not what Jesus was referring to
- c) True peace is not the absence of conflict – not just two enemies not fighting eg. westbank
- d) Absence of conflict in which opposite sides are being brought together in righteousness ending in a right relationship
- e) Peacemakers are those disciples of Jesus who actively overcome evil with good - strive to prevent contention and strife. Use their influence to reconcile strife – they change hostile attitudes into ones that seek the best interests of everyone.

That is the kind of person Jesus says is blessed.

## 3 types of people in our world

### 1) Peace breaker

- a. Go out of way to cause trouble and division – troublemakers – looking for fight – their role in life to play devil's advocate – we cannot afford peace breakers in marriage, families, churches. Prov 16:28 ; 22:10; before we go on witch hunt need to examine hearts to see if we fit this role (at times) Can be a breaker and not even know it
- b. Easiest way to be peace breaker is with tongue – gossip, slander, judgmental. James 3:10 we can either bless or curse – choice - We are here to build up not tear down – we create unity not division. Never a good enough reason for sins of the tongue. Not called to be peace breakers

### 2) Peace fakers

- a. Go to any length to avoid conflict or confrontation. Settle for counterfeit peace that avoids real issues – avoid talking about things that may upset the other person – give up or give in even when issue is vital
- b. Bill Hybels story – friend's life taking bad turn so he took him for lunch to talk – at right time he said not trying to run your life but I am concerned about the direction that it is taking – friend got mad and nearly punched him – bill said sorry I will never mention it again – friend shipwrecked his life – bill said to friend I failed you I should have said hit me if you have to but I am going to stay on your case because I love you and am concerned about your future my friend.
- c. Peace at any price is not peace – devil whispers 'maintain status quo, don't upset apple cart' – Eph 4:25 – not called to be peace fakers

### 3) Peace makers

- a. God wants us to be peacemakers – Matt 5:9
- b. Seek peace between God and man – don't need to do anything to make peace with God – already made – God signed treaty of peace in blood of Jesus saying that he is no longer angry – our sins are forgiven and all we have to do is sign the peace treaty – God is satisfied with death of Jesus to take away our sin and remove its penalty all we have to

do is be satisfied with what satisfies God. God declared the cross was enough to end war when we agree with God about that the war is over.

- i. How can you be a peacemaker? Know the prince of peace – JC – relationship with him – trust him, believe in him, have faith in him – he has ability to change things – fix things that are broken – calm storms at sea
  - ii. Peacemakers make every effort to get out the good news that God is not angry peace has been made. Eg. Japanese soldiers in pacific islands kept fighting – did not know or did not believe war was over. Many people won't agree with God war is over – we need to help people understand and eventually sign the peace treaty.
- c. Seek peace between people – making peace with brother is more important than religious ceremonies – don't bother coming to church if we are bothered with a brother and know we can settle the matter before the service. Peacemaking is of greater consequence than church playing. not only our issues but help others too
- i. Peacemakers pay attention to what they say – tell the truth in love and trust God with outcome – want peace that is lasting and worthwhile – trying to help people they do so gently – Prov 15:1
  - ii. Attack problem not person – cannot fix problem if you are focused on blaming – if you are still trying to establish blame you are still bitter – Eph 4:31-32
  - iii. Cooperate as much as possible – Rom 12:18 – peace always has a price (look what is cost Jesus – in homes, marriage, church etc – costs you your selfishness, self inflated ego, - have to say my wife was right, my husband has point, co-worker has legitimate gripe – Love Story – love means you never have to say I'm sorry – do so over and over again
  - iv. Emphasize relationships above resolution – people are different, don't always see things the same way, don't always agree – things we will never see eye to eye – still walk hand in hand. 2 COr 5:17-18. God calls us to be in peacemaking business – he says relationships are important – that is what life is about when all is said and done

#### Benefits of being a peacemaker

- 1) You are blessed – inward more than outward condition – God's favor and approval
- 2) Called sons of God

Alexander Great ruled nearly whole known world – anyone charged with crime could appeal to him – when appeal was made his judgment was final – known as fair but ruthless. Young soldier came before him wearing the tunic of his army – what is he charged with – cowardice in battle – hush fell over assembly hall – Alex expected men to be gallant and brave since he led them into battle himself – Alex looked at soldier who was a youth – what is your name – worthy king my name is Alexander – you are found guilty of your crimes and must pay the penalty – I sentence you to either change your conduct or change your name – for no man can bear the name Alexander, my name , and do the things you have done. God is saying change your behavior for you bear the name of my son.

- a. speaks of family relationship but of a person's character not position – means you reflect the wonderful peacemaking character of the Lord God. Whenever we bring people into relationship with God or with each other we look a lot like God. You look like your father. Future passive verb suggesting that throughout eternity this will be the title of those who were peacemakers. imagine walking in heaven and hearing angels say 'look there a son of God – he acted just like the savior when he was on earth – he was a peacemaker.

## CONCLUSION

Telemachus was monk in 4C – felt God saying Go to Rome – left cloistered monastery, put possessions in sack and went to Rome – people thronging in streets with excitement – why – day gladiators will be fighting and killing each other in coliseum – thought 4 c after Christ and they still kill each other for enjoyment – ran to coliseum – gladiators said 'hail to Caesar, we die for Caesar'. Monk thought this is not right – jumped over railing and went to middle of field between two gladiators and said 'in the name of Christ forbear (stop) – crowd protested and yelled 'run him through'. Gladiator came and hit him in stomach with back of sword and sent him sprawling in sand – got up and ran and repeated what he said – crowd yelled run him through – gladiator came over and plunged his sword into monk's stomach and he fell to sand which began to turn red with his blood – one last time he gasped out same message – hush fell over 80000 people in coliseum – soon a man stood and left, another, more, whole arena emptied out – last known gladiatorial contest in history of Rome

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace, Where there is hatred, let me sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope; Where there is darkness, light; Where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life.